

Submitter: Mark Kirchmeier
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Commerce and General
Government
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1580

Chair Meek, Vice-Chair Drazan, and Members of the Committee:

I'm Mark Kirchmeier, co-publisher of the North Peninsula Review, a monthly serving the St. Johns and North Portland area.

I've worked for newspapers in Columbia, Curry, Jackson, Josephine, Lane and Multnomah counties over the last 45 years.

And I don't know much, but I know this. When a local newspaper dies... bad...things...happen...

Civic engagement declines. Citizens don't learn about key city council and school board meetings. People don't get as much information about their public lands, public parks, public fisheries and public safety. Small businesses lose a forum and vehicle for galvanizing attention to economic concerns.

And communities lose things -- that the economic statistics can't measure -- such as how newspapers celebrate our community successes. They tell the human-interest stories that bind us together. Birth announcements. Weddings. 50th anniversaries. Memorial Services.

Google isn't going to do the original reporting for those stories.

But small town and community newspapers can. Please stop this Goliath from gobbling them up.

Please support SB 1580.

Sincerely,

Mark Kirchmeier, co-publisher, North Peninsula Review monthly newspaper, covering the St. Johns and North Portland community.